Rainbow Friendship

This story takes place a few months before Magical Girl Raising Project: Limited

She couldn’t avoid the high kick.

If only she could put out her rainbows, this wouldn’t be a problem. Unfortunately, she had to block every hit with her hands, and she’s not good at that kind of combat.

She blocked the incoming kick with her arms, but the strength of the other girl sent her flying, her back hitting a chainlink fence, and bursting through it.

She burst and rolled off in the concrete, creating small craters where she landed.

Blood was leaking across her face. If she could use her rainbows, she could’ve broken her fall, but nothing’s coming out, no matter what she tried.

There was no light either. Everything was dark.

A large slab of concrete was thrown at her, and she immediately punched through it instinctively, but the force still knocked her back.

There was darkness, and she could only see small silhouettes of her opponent.

This was going to be hard, but Rain Pou understood what the other Magical Girl can do.

Light Control. The other Magical Girl can control sources of light and make them disappear completely.

Unfortunately, since Rain Pou’s rainbows are made of light, that meant that Rain Pou couldn’t use her rainbows at all. Taking away her rainbows is like taking away her weapons *and* her armor.

More large pieces of gravel were being thrown towards her, but this time Rain Pou dodged them.

Even though she couldn’t see them, she could still hear them.

Multiple chunks were being thrown, and she dodged them left and right.

She used her hearing to predict where the Magical Girl would be, tracing the source of the throws, like a string in the darkness.

She ran towards, moving as fast as she can, faster than she usually ran, avoiding any chunks of concrete thrown at her, using that to track down the Magical Girl.

Toko always told her, the power of Magical Girls lies in their imagination, so Rain Pou imagined her target, imagined where she would be.

And when she reached her location…

…She used her momentum as leverage, and launched a kick straight to the center of the supposed target.

Crack!

She felt her feet burst through flesh, and the sound of spine cracking.

The darkness evaporated, and light in the dark streets slowly returned once more. The Magical Girl opponent, a woman clad in black, looked down at the large wound in her chest.

Rain Pou had missed her intended target. She had just wanted to stun her, but it looked like she killed her…

She went limp, eyes wide, and detransformed.

She became a human again, dead on the street.

A school uniform. This was a middle school girl.

Rain Pou looked at the body, she closed her eyes and shook her head.

Shit…

This wasn't in her job description.

She was supposed to be stealing information, not killing anyone. That Magical Girl was in the wrong place at the wrong time.

"Rain Pou! Rain Pou! You're alive! I saw the whole fight from one of the apartments!"

A voice was heard from afar. The voice was from the sky, quite small actually, if you didn't have the hearing of Magical Girls.

That's because the voice came from a small creature. A miniature girl. A Fairy.

Her name was Toko, and she was Rain Pou's mascot.

"You *saw* the fight? How'd you see the fight? Didn't she remove all light?" asked Rain Pou.

“Oh, I just used this new function in Magical Phones to detect Magical Potential in a short range area, like a radar,” said Toko.

“Ah… Alright. Well, anyway, that girl’s magic seemed to immediately counter mine. Was it an accident or was it planned?” asked Rain Pou.

“Whaddya mean?”

“When I went in here as a Magical Girl, I met her immediately and we went on the wrong terms. Considering her powerset, I don’t know if someone hired her or not. Was this a setup?”

“I could have a word with our boss! I’ll ask later on!”

When Rain Pou first entered the world of Magical Girls, she didn’t really think much of them.

She thought they were just children’s fantasies at first.

Now, however, she was part of this world’s society, and of all the parts where she was, it wasn’t the glamorous lives up above, but the seedy underbelly below.

There are plenty of villainous Magical Girls.

Bribery, whistleblowers, backstabbings, and various other things that some Magical Girls do behind the scenes. Rain Pou was often hired to kill these people.

But Rain Pou doesn’t place herself in a higher pedestal, nor does she have any delusions about who she is.

She knows she’s not a substitute for justice. She knows she’s not a vigilante. She’s knows she’s just as bad as the people she’s being hired to kill.

Rain Pou is a rogue who kills other rogues.

Usually, she was hired by higher-ups in the Land of Magic, who want to get their hands dirty without being publically outed. Rain Pou’s jobs were also not publically outed.

These kinds of people exist in any society, even one as fantastical as the Land of Magic.

One day, Toko came to her with a job offer.

“I’ve got something! But before that, we might wanna have some insurance?” said Toko.

“Insurance? What do you mean insurance?”

“We make a group of Magical Girls to help us. We shouldn’t tell them the reason of course, but it’s a good way to bolster our ranks. Also, if we get caught, they’ll be useful meat shields too!” said Toko.

“You expect me to find a group of girls willingly to help?”

“Let *me* handle the Magical Potential and people, you just do the friendship thingy,” said Toko.

“Seems unnecessarily bothersome,” said Rain Pou.

Rain Pou laid down in her bed.

She rested a bit, but she enjoyed a life of thrills and fun. She didn’t want to go back to whatever she had before.

Before Middle School, Rain Pou had to live with an abusive older sister, and always had to act like she was okay. She wasn’t allowed to be her own person, and always had any sense of free will crushed.

So when she became a Magical Girl, she immediately ran off to do her own thing. She was grateful and happy to be rid of that bitch. However, the life that she had to live now was also an acting game.

If the Land of Magic ever caught wind of any of her real actions, she would immediately lose her status as a Magical Girl, go back to being an ordinary human, and probably have to see her sister again.

Rain Pou didn’t want any of that.

So Rain Pou followed Toko’s advice and philosophy. Toko taught her how to have fun and become her own person.

She slowly led her to the life of where she is, now.

When she first killed someone, she puked and felt sick for days. However, as she killed more, she became desensitized.

She learned how to detach herself from any potential targets. When she was on the job, feellings for someone will be a weakness. That’s why she never had any delusions that she was a hero.

It was easier to know the reality. She was a rogue Magical Girl, and she was killing other Magical Girls in her job. It made it easier to handle if you're not emotionally attached.

But now Toko's asking her to make friends so that she can use them as backup and a potential failsafe?

That meant slowing down. That meant opening up herself. That meant showing attachment to someone else.

She looked at Toko, "So what do you want me to do?"

"Well, I've detected only a small few that have Magical Potential in the school. Some are mediocre, some are ridiculously low, some come in pairs, some are loners. Oh, one of the teachers also has potential, and it's easy to leverage her if her students are also Magical Girls. *Your job* is to be friends with those loners!"

"Huh?"

"I can easily handle the ones that come in pairs, don't worry. It's the loners that's gonna be hard to catch. I've got a list of them here. Your mission, pick one and get close to her," said Toko.

"How the hell am I supposed to do that?"

"You figure it out! I already did the legwork of actually finding these girls and rounding it down for you!"

Toko had taught Rain Pou many things.

How to fight, how to survive, how to live freely.

Not how to make friends.

"I can't just *make friends*. It's not that easy," said Rain Pou.

"Talk to them, then!"

"I don't have anyone close to me, that's the point! *You* taught me that!" said Rain Pou.

"You have me!"

"You hardly count, Toko."

"Well… there's a first time for everything, right?"

Rain Pou sighed, and looked at the list of girls that Toko made, all names.

“Tatsuko Sasaki… what grade is she?”

“She’s your classmate!” said Toko.

“What!? You’re shitting me!”

Apparently, she wasn’t shitting her.

Tatsuko Sasaki was indeed a classmate of Kaori Ninotsugi, AKA Rain Pou.

Kaori may not be good at making friends, but she knew how to analyze social situations.

Most of the girls here have had friends with other girls, but Tatsuko was always alone in her chair.

She never talked to anyone at all.

Perhaps she was a bit like Kaori in a sense? Maybe she was hiding something from the world, or maybe she was just shy.

Her expressions don’t really show much, and it didn’t give any hint of what she was like. She was an enigma.

She always did push everyone away from her.

During breaktime, Kaori watched Tatsuko’s actions closely, being careful not to be spotted herself.

Tatsuko always went to lunch alone, went to the toilet alone, went to the library to read books alone. Nobody noticed her, and nobody really even cared.

Was this girl really that lonely?

Not even Kaori noticed her at first, not until Toko told her about Tatsuko. Perhaps this girl really did need someone.

Toko approached Rain Pou back at her room.

“Well? How was she?”

“Bad. I don’t think she’s useful, even if she has potential. Nobody noticed her, and I don’t think she’s capable of fighting if things get rough,” said Rain Pou.

“Well, shit. Guess you gotta find someone else, then,” said Toko.

“I told you I’m not good at making friends.”

“You’re just not trying hard enough! Either you get close to her, or find someone else. Either way, I’m taking what you have.”

“A little help would be nice,” said Rain Pou.

“Can’t help you, too busy dealing with other girls in the school.”

“Fucking fairy…”

“Hey, I’m not lying, look at this, I already narrowed down our targets, in only a few days, *you* on the other hand, only needed to find one. If anything, *you’re* the lazy one,” said Toko.

She threw a piece of paper towards Rain Pou, and Rain Pou looked at the names on the list.

Umi Shihabara, a very rowdy girl. She had high physicals that could be useful in a fight.

Kayo Nemura, always sticking around with Umi. She was level-headed and calm, good for controlling Umi as well as possibly planning things out.

Nozomi Himeno, the obligatory teacher. At first, Rain Pou thought she was a student when she met her in the entrance ceremony, due to her babyface, but apparently not. Magical Girl who’s a teacher, that’s interesting.

And Mine Musubiya, a class representative who’s good at dealing out tasks and stuff. Probably the leader type, being a class rep and everything.

And on Kaori’s end, Tatsuko Sasaki.

It’s strange that Kaori never noticed Tatsuko, when Kaori put emphasis on making sure her school life goes great.

“See? I’m actually doing work. So you either stop what you’re doing and find someone more useful to be a Magical Girl, or you befriend that Tatsuko girl. The more Magical Girls we have, the better,” said Toko.

How did she get under her radar before? Was she truly just a lonely girl, like Kaori was, hiding something before.

Magical Girl or not, Kaori actually wanted to get close to her.

Tatsuko didn’t show any openings, though… There has to be a way of talking with her.

There has to be a way to get close.

Kaori observed Tatsuko at lunch. Kaori could try to speak up with her, but whenever she did, Kaori herself would get nervous.

Kaori’s friendships were never started by herself. People always came up to her, and she accepted them in her circle. Keeps the school masquerade open, and is also easy to do.

So now, Kaori being the active one… That’s harder.

It seems that Tatsuko likes omelettes for lunch. She ate them everyday. When she ate, she seemed to enjoy the food, although she didn’t smile to show it.

She really does hide her feelings.

Maybe if Kaori made omelettes, she’ll be closer with her.

At home, Kaori started cooking. She only learned a bit from Home Economics, but she also browsed several cooking sites, and tried to understand the recipe from there.

This is her first time cooking an omelette, too. This is harder than she thought.

When she thought she finished, she tasted it, and it burned in her mouth.

Well, the omelette plan won’t work. Let’s try another plan.

It was the rainy season, and what better way to get close to someone than to walk with them sharing an umbrella?

She had to make sure the situation was perfect. She checked the weather forecasts every day, and made sure to be prepared when it was heavily raining.

Finally, on a rainy day, Tatsuko came to school with an umbrella. Now to make sure it still rained after-school.

Kaori had an umbrella of her own, and during classtime, after everyone placed their umbrellas in umbrella stands, Kaori excused herself, saying that she felt a bit sick.

Outside, she transformed into Rain Pou, took Tatsuko's umbrella, and hid it somewhere, then she detransformed and slept in the nurse's office for most of the day.

All according to plan.

When it was time to go back home, Tatsuko was nervously looking for her umbrella.

The plan was simple, offer an umbrella to Tatsuko, and bond with her. That was easy, right?

When Tatsuko had given up, Kaori approached her.

"Hey, lost your umbrella? Wanna go home together? I've got mine," said Kaori.

Tatsuko widened her eyes, and she immediately shook her head, smiling too, "N-No thanks, I'm good," she said.

Kaori was stunned.

Tatsuko simply walked outside and walked home in the cold rain.

She'd rather be wet and cold than make friends…

What kind of life did Tatsuko have to be like this?

Kaori actually felt bad for this plan now, at first, she thought Tatsuko was just weak and timid, but no one that's weak and timid would walk on the rain willingly…

…Tatsuko's stronger than she thought.

Gym class.

Dodgeball.

Tatsuko disliked dodgeball, Kaori didn't mind it. However, Kaori noticed Tatsuko's expression, just standing from the crowd.

Maybe this time Kaori can do it. Maybe this time Kaori can actually be friends with her!

The gym teacher placed Kaori and Tatsuko in the same teams.

Ah yes! Kaori had a plan. Kaori found dodgeball to be fairly easy, thanks to her lifetime experience of combat training.

So her plan was simple…

…If Tatsuko was about to be thrown a dodgeball, Kaori would immediately take the hit, and save her!

That would be great!

She'd go, "Oh Kaori-Chan! You saved me!"

What she thought and the reality of the situation, however, was completely different. Apparently, nobody even targeted Tatsuko even if she was standing completely still.

Was she *that* unnoticeable?

Of course, she barely fought back, but she wasn't even thought of as an easy target.

At least give the girl a fair shot!

But Kaori can't give up. She fought back against the enemy team, dodging and throwing the balls as well as possible.

She made sure not to allow her teammates access to the ball, and one by one, her teammates were eliminated.

If it's only Kaori and Tatsuko, then Tatsuko will *have* to be targeted.

Then, as it whittled down to two of them, Kaori finally was ready. She dodged every ball, threw it back everytime, and waited for the one moment where Tatsuko would be targeted.

The enemy team was dwindling, why was everyone aiming for Kaori? She hasn't let a dodgeball through yet.

Why isn't anyone aiming for…

…Huh?

Kaori looked behind her, and saw no one.

Tatsuko was in the outfield. Why was she in the outfield? She wasn't hit with anything yet.

Suddenly, a wave of dodgeballs came crashing towards Kaori.

The coach rang the whistle.

Kaori had asked the coach as to why Tatsuko was in the outfield when she wasn't technically out.

"She went there herself," said the coach.

"What? That's against the rules!"

"Tatsuko's not the sports type, even I know this. You were doing 90% of the team's work, and Tatsuko felt like she wasn't necessary. Since she's not physically fit, I decided it's fine."

…So Kaori's plan backfired.

But what kind of life was Tatsuko living? To be ignored by almost everyone and considered useless…

…That's not fair for anyone.

One day in class, Kaori saw Tatsuko reading a manga. A manga?

It was a shonen manga, it was some kind of mecha manga as well. Kaori instantly went back home and found the manga online.

Maybe…

…Maybe this is her chance of talking to her!

Maybe now Kaori can befriend Tatsuko!

She found out the name of the manga, she found out the next release date of the next volume.

She found out the characters, and of course, she read the manga herself.

If there was one way to befriend Tatsuko this would be it.

It didn't even matter what the original reason was, anymore. Tatsuko's life was unfair. It's not right to be shunned by everyone like that.

It's not right for everyone to just ignore your state, no matter who you are.

Kaori's going to be close to her.

Kaori's going to befriend her for sure.

Besides, Toko said it was for insurance, that doesn't mean it'll come true, right? Tatsuko deserved a happy life, and Kaori was going to try and give her that happiness.

Toko lied down on the bed. Unlike Magical Girls, fairies actually need sleep.

Days had gone by since the first time Toko had suggested that list. Soon, they'd have to do the job.

Ah… peace and quiet

Or so Toko thought.

SLAM!

The door opened. Toko's eyes awoke, and she was grumpy.

There, on the door, was Rain Pou crying and crying.

“FUCK! Why do people just ignore her like that? She doesn’t even try to socialize if I bring her close to others too, I try to talk to her but she just won’t let me in! God, she’s just playing with my mind right now, Toko. Hey! Toko! Are you listening to me!?”

“What the hell are you crying about?” asked Toko.

“Tatsuko!”

“I thought you said she wasn’t fit. You shouldn’t be making unnecessary friendships, Rain Pou.”

“Well… I guess I changed my mind.”

“You’re sure?”

“…I …I guess.”

“Well, I could always just give her the old fairy speech anyways, she’ll come aound,” said Toko.

“NO! Don’t do that! She doesn’t need that! She needs a real friend. She just needs someone she can talk to.”

“What the hell happened to you?”

“Can you teach me how to make omelettes? Please?”

“Wha?”

“It’s her favorite food… I wanna give it to her… Please, Toko?”

“If this is part of some convoluted plan…”

“No, I *really* think I can get close to her this way… Please? I wanna be her friend.”

Toko sighed.

“Fairies can’t make omelettes, but fine, as long as I can get some sleep afterwards.”